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than is generally supposed, and whether the attitude of Mohammedanism toward morality is not due largely to the physical conditions under which that religion originated.

Mohammedanism is not gaining converts except in West Africa, nor is it losing by conversions to Christianity. Estimates as to the total number of Moslems in the world to-day vary from 175 to 300 million. In the final chapter the number is given as 233 million, about one-seventh of the population of the world. E. H.

Geschichte des deutschen Bodens mit seinem Pflanzen- und Tierleben. Von J. Wimmer. Halle a. S., Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1905.

The evolution of the soil of Germany and its products, from the earliest times to the present, is one of the subjects bordering on geography and history alike, and therefore the students of both these sciences are bound to be indebted to the author for his careful and minute researches into these subjects. In the first part he deals with the history of the soil proper; in the second, with that of its flora and fauna. The former is the more directly geographical, while the latter will be found a rich mine of reference for botanists and zoologists for all kinds of questions pertaining to animal and plant species, living or extinct, of that region.

The author differentiates between "Wildboden" (uncultivated soil) and "Kulturboden" (cultivated soil), and the transition from the former to the latter forms the history of the soil. In this four stages or periods can be distinguished: (1) the Celto-Romanic or primitive condition; (2) the period of the migration of the nations; (3) the conquest of the wildernesses from 600-1300 A.D.; (4) extension and transformation of the cultivated area, from the 14th to the 19th century.

The primeval aspect of the country has been described by Julius Cæsar and Tacitus as being characterized by its dense woods. They covered the mountain ranges and extended downward from them into the lower country; and it is significant that the Latin texts, in describing German topography, always use the words "*saltus*" or "*sylvæ*" in place of "*montes*." This will easily explain why so many German mountains have the name of "Forest" even now: "Black Forest," etc. From these reports, however, the erroneous conception has been formed of old Germania having been an unbroken forest wilderness. The mere fact that even in those primitive times almost inexhaustible herds of Germanic origin were pouring forth again and again into the Roman provinces proves it cannot have been so, because an unbroken forest land could not support such a comparatively large population. It cannot be assumed, either, that at those early times the inhabitants had cleared enough land to support them, because primitive man will not clear the soil unless he has learned beforehand the value of the soil as the producer of his food. It follows that the primeval forest, in its original aspect, must have been interspersed in many places with openings or glades where a spontaneous growth of plants fit to eat taught man to improve upon nature by a primitive form of agriculture. Such open spaces, which must have been quite densely populated, could not be found in the valleys of the rivers, because in those times the valleys were unhealthy and practically uninhabitable, but rather on the higher and drier land at or near the base of the mountains, and historical researches have proved the truth of this hypothesis. The traces of the earliest settlements have been discovered on the Bavarian Plateau, along the fall line at the eastern border of the upper Rhine Valley, and on the plains of Central Germany near the

upper and lower courses of the Elbe and Saale. The character of these settlements differs according to the race of the settlers: north and east of a line drawn along the River Main and from Frankfurt to the lower course of the Weser, the population was Germanic, and lived in villages; south and west of that line it was Celtic, and lived on single farms. When the former penetrated into the Celtic territory, they either substituted their form of settlement for that of the Celts, as in Franconia, or adapted themselves to the system which they found, as in Westphalia. These cross relations are rich in very interesting detail from both the historical and geographical point of view. Into the territory which the Germans had left vacant behind them, the Slavs penetrated from the East, and they, too, founded villages; but theirs were built either circularly, around a pool or pond, or along a street, following the course of a river or brook. The Slavs always settled near the water, except where they occupied previously German settlements.

The reclamation of the wilderness was not begun until after the migration of the nations, and carried on especially by the meritorious efforts of the religious orders who came thither as missionaries, but also, following their example, by the Emperor Charlemagne and the lords of feudal Germany. Among the farmers of the Middle Ages it was the custom to leave the farm to the eldest son, while the others were sent out into the wilderness to break the ground for new homes of their own, in very much the same way as did the squatter in the American border regions. But Europe woke up earlier to the consciousness of the danger incident to a wide devastation of the forests, as is known by ordinances from kings and magistrates, at a very early date, enjoining moderation in the work of clearing, and the reforestation of all tracts not permanently available for cultivation. In the fourth period the work of reclamation has been carried on practically by draining the swamps and moors, of which the work done under Frederick the Great in the Oder "Bruch" is perhaps the most gigantic task of this sort carried out before the invention of modern machinery; it was said that by doing this the king had conquered another province in peace, as he did Silesia in war. The "Möser" of the Bavarian plateau, and the extensive moors of north western Germany, are other examples of successful drainage on a large scale.

M. K. G.

Handbuch der geographischen Ortsbestimmung. Von Dr. Adolf Marcuse. Braunschweig, Friedrich Vieweg und Sohn, 1905.

The book is intended as a guide for geographers and explorers, and also as an introduction into the practical problems of astronomy for students and teachers at the higher schools. The first part (63 pp.) gives an abstract of the principal chapters of astronomical geography; the second (35 pp.) describes and characterises the various uses of the most important works of reference: nautical almanachs, ephemerides, tables, etc., for mathematico-geographical calculations; the third (79 pp.) treats in a similar way the instruments needed for the work (chronometers, telescopes, quadrants, etc.), and the fourth and main part of the book discusses the modern methods of determining time, latitude, longitude, and azimuth. Among them special mention ought to be made of an original way of determining location without the use of logarithms (Merkatorfunktionen) or of angle meters (by means of thread triangles), which can be used wherever the instruments may be found at fault, with approximately accurate results. Another new feature is the instructions for determining locations on balloon trips, based on experiments at the Aeronautical Observatory at Berlin. The illustration of